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My father and his work.

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My father and his work.

Let me, please, begin with a very personal statement. It is difficult for a son to speak publicly about his father. His intimacy with the private figure makes it almost ^{impossible} for him to judge the public one. -

The case becomes, maybe, even more complicated if - like in our case - father and son have the same profession: I mean, if the son, too of a great writer, too, ^{it} tries to be a writer himself. Between literary father and son, there is a strange mixture of influence and opposition. The feelings of the father, concerning the writing son, ^{might} be rather complex; and not less complicated are the spiritual relations of the son to his father. He admires him; in certain periods of his life, he even tries to copy him, maybe; at the other hand, it is his natural ambition, to find his own style, to make his own way, to become independent - in every sense of the word - from his father.

2a | ... This mixture of admiration and opposition, which I try to describe, is specially confusing ^{as long as} when the son is still very young. Growing up, becoming a man - he becomes more objective. He is able to see and to judge his father, in relation to the European literature, to the literature of the world... ^{hand} Continuity Primarily

But, at the other ^{hand}, there always remain so many memories, which make an absolutely objective outlook, concerning the father, impossible. -

The father dominates, as the huge personality, the childhood. When

call back my earliest impression,
I close my eyes, when I try to remember - the first face I find among my souvenirs, is my father's face. It is a very serious face, and it is a very kind face. ^{My} father's voice made me always, somehow, timid - yes, it scared me a little, and, at the other hand, a friendly word from him had the power to make us children ^{very} especially happy, ^{and very} especially proud...

The strange thing is it did not change during all these years... However, it didn't change for me... Always the same...

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The continuity of his life...:in Munich,country-places(Bavaria,or
Lithuania...);Küsnacht;P r i n c e t o n ;(his connection with the
Tank In Harbor
University.) - Family-life.Never very social.Good neighbours.In
Munich:W a l t e r and F r a n k . - A few friends in Küsnacht. -
In Princeton:Einstein - and a few others.

His desk - very orderly,almost pedantic. - Library - fine Goethe-
edition - ,grammophon;collection of records - preference for Wagner,
whose music is a bore...

His s c h e d u l e -:the same,everywhere. - He rises early. -
Work....Promenade(with dog.Doesn't have one yet,in Pr.) - Lunch.
Reading papers,magazines.Siesta.Tea.Correspondence.(T o o much,
nowadays...:in the beginning,he answered everything by his own hand.
Later:dictating to mother...Now:2 secretaries...) - After dinner:
reading;or friends;or,else:reading allowed...

Childhood souvenirs....Father,reading Dickend,Tom Soyer,Goethe,
Tolstoi...Later,his own works...The whole Magic Mountain...Joseph...
....Not social;but likes little festivals - especially family
festivals.Chrtistmas.

Interest in the stage - in spite of not being actually a playwright
...Doesn't miss opening nights in Zürich,Munich.Now N.Y. - :the
other day:"H a m l e t" - : "one feels like a different man...From
time to time,one needs such a stimulation..."

But - besides literature and philosophy - main interest are
m u s i c and m e d i c i n e .

*Movie. Recreation
Goth. Holy wood
with Shirley Temple
Disney.
Hollywood.*

M u s i c - in almost all of his books.The passion of the last
Buddenbrook;the grammophon in the Magic Mountain....ect.

M e d e c i n e .The destiled description of deseases and death..
like a doctor...(Looks like a doctor - some people say.Anyh In any
case - not what naive people may think a poet looks like,...)

2a. It may seem strange, that a man who has
a definite pedag. influence in the world-at-large,
is not actively so.
No direct pedagogical influence. Concerning his own children -

we are six - , more observing than teaching. He is an ideal father -

I must emphasise this - , because he wants his children to be in-

dependant. We we - Erika and myself - had our wilde years, our

excentric period - he watched us - rather sorrowful than angry.

Described these confused years in : "Disorder and early sorrow."

- His example - the example of his life, his work - saved us

from becoming too wilde and excentric. We were ambitious to

achieve something, since he had achieved such a lot... We knew his

life. He liked to tell stories of his childhood, his early years...

Lübeck - near Hamburg - ; the beautiful house; the mother from

Rio de Janeiro; the room with Heinrich - great writer, by his own

~~wrote~~ right: "Henri IV."; "The Blue Angel".... - ; Munich; Italy;

acted in Ibsen's "Wilde Duck"; "Simplicissimus"; the first fee for

short story; Jakob Wassermann; Buddenbrooks - jok for friends;

a very long jok; when it was finished - he knew, it was more...

publisher wanted to cut it; he refused - preferred to renounce

publication altogether... P Convinced publisher publisher by pathetic

letter, written in Military Hospital. (Military service. Couldn't

stand ideal manner of walking, known as Goose Step. Became ill.)

- "Bud." published - in two volumes. Slow success - but solid. When

he left Germany - : Million copies...

I showed him what I wrote. Started writing at the age of 13. With
16 - 75 novels - ect....: not without shuddering. - "It read it
without displeasure." (Gentle cirtic.) Started publishing at the age
of 17. Father reading everything. Wrote in Magic Mountain: "To my
esteemed Colleague. His promising Father." - Gives advice. As I
know he is sincere - his praises - which I receive from time to
time - i more important than Newspaperarticals...

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The interest for disease = interest for life itself...The development of Hans Castorp: fascinated by the strange atmosphere of sanatorium; by the charms of an ill Russian woman...Staying there seven years, without being actually ill....Goes through many mental and physical adventures...Discovers new love for life...: New Humanism...

(Story of the "Mag. Mon." - :slight My Mother. Slight affection of her lungs. Devos. Letters. Visits. The plan for the short story. Started writing it. War. Interruption. "Reflexions." Restarted after war...

Importance of this book "Reflexions of an Unpolitical..." Paradoxical enough: his first book which deals with politics. In a different manner....~~Until~~ Till the war: purely aesthetic-psychological. Pupil of the pessimistic Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Wagner. The problem of the artist. Dominating: artist versus life; versus bourgeois. "Tonio Kroeger." "Death in Venice." "Buddenbrooks." "Royal Highness" - second novel - :disguises for the one problem...)

During the war: the social interest begins as a patriotic feelings... Bad relations to Heinrich Mann - : radical pacifist; pro. French, ect. - Conception of German Kultur-versus civilisation... *Don Quixote* "Lohengrin." Still: Pessimism; sympathy with death; still: Schopenhauer...

The great and decisive change: after the war. Artistically: "Mag. Mon." Politically: "German Republic". (Goethe-festival Frankfurt. Ebert.) - Rage of nationalists. - Since: always for Democracy...

But - : without irony. Brave. Honest. No more "Don Quixote". Fighter. - Warning against Nationalism. Nazis. Begging the bourgeois to make peace with Social Democracy - in order to save Democracy... Berlin Speech. Noise. Young Nazi author, in blue spectacles - like Luddendorff.

Political meeting... / Hated
Was able to fight bad German instincts.
He knew them.

1933. On lecture tour. Araso. Nazis in Munich. We called him up - :
w a r n e d up. House-cleaning. He staid where he was. Never ~~set~~
set foot into Ger., since.

France. Switzerland. - Silent. Eager not to lose contact... However,
everybody knew what he felt... Couldn't last. Expressed his feelings,
very openly. The Honorary Doctor-title - : Bonn-letter. (People learn
it by heart - ect.) - First one of many political manifestations,
declarations - most famous of them: "Coming victory."

Political acivitivity takes great part of his time. Still: main-thing -
the novels. - J o s e p h . - ~~Lotte in Weimar~~. Mythical picture of
mankind... related to "Faust". Author of Faust: in leading character
of other novel "Lotte in Weimar". Goethe - as the ~~typ repre~~ great
German - and the great European, the great Citizen of the Wolrd".
Almost more than human - and the most human... His comprehensive
spirit, embracing civilisation and nature. Anti-barbarian - but not
"intellectual" in the bad meaning of the word...

"Im not like Goethe. But I belong somehow to his family...", as one
Austrian writer, Adalbert Stifter, said.

He is almost gay - because he is faithful. He trusts: the better elements
of the mankind m u s t win - on the long run. But - trough how
many adventures, catastrophes must we go, before this final victory?

- Sometimes depressed. After Austria. After Munich-peace. (His Czec
passport. Frienddhip for Benesch.) Einstein came. The sadest day of
my whole life..." - We knew: He felt the same way...

He is watching the political delelopment, as you used to watch our
growing up: sorrowful, but nor angry... He is hopeful. And, I think, we

are allowed to be hopeful, as he is. The cause of Freedom, Culture, and
all the values dear and necessary to us, cannot be lost, as long
a few men of his kind are actively with us. The dictators make all the
the noise, are spending mi lions for propaganda and for war preparations

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These few men - poets or scientist - do quietly and steadily their work. Mybe, people in the future will decide, those - and not their enemies, the dictators, ruling now, and threatening the world - are the reals heros of our days.